

Pro-Regime Greek Paper Asks End of Monarchy

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ATHENS, Feb. 28—A pro-Government newspaper called today for abolition of the monarchy.

The article, spread across page 1 of Simerina, was signed by Nikolaos Steiropoulos, a former Deputy of the Progressive party, called for a referendum to abolish the monarchy and set up a republic.

Greece has been a monarchy since 1833, with brief revolutionary intervals as a republic. King Constantine fled to exile in Rome in December, 1967, after an unsuccessful bid to topple the military-backed Government, which had seized power and suspended the Constitution a few months earlier.

In 1968, in the new Constitution approved by a 93-percent national vote of "yes," the regime preserved the monarchy. It has never publicly indicated that it plans to depose the 31-year-old King.

Under the penal code, anyone who publicly advocates the overthrow of the country's constitutional system is guilty of

treason and liable to at least five years' imprisonment.

Nevertheless, diplomatic observers here believe that the Government is behind the call for abolition of the monarchy since the article in Simerina, an afternoon paper, follows front-page editorials in two other pro-Government newspapers yesterday declaring that the time had come to decide the fate of the monarchy.

The newspaper Acropolis urged that King Constantine himself should ask for a referendum to determine if the people wanted him back. Heretofore a royalist daily, it said that if the King returned there would be a risk that Greece might drift back to the political chaos that prevailed before the 1967 military takeover.

Signs of King Removed

Eleftheros Kosmos, a right-wing paper, accused the King's entourage of "plotting and conspiring" against the Government.

The 1968 Constitution said the King would return to Greece after the proclamation

of the next general elections—for which no date has been set—unless the Government decided to recall him earlier. Premier George Papadopoulos, in an address to the nation two months ago, vowed to abide by the 1968 Constitution.

Nevertheless, over the last five years, the Greek leaders have quietly eliminated all public reminders of the King.

In today's article, Mr. Steiropoulos said: "The most radical solution would be the abolition of the crowned democracy and a reconstitution of the regime in a way that would insure the kingless Greek republic a long and undisturbed life."

The Government has not reacted directly to the press campaign. Byron Stamato-poulos, Under Secretary to the Premier, said:

"The newspapers can comment freely about the Government and the nation's problems. The Government does not have a mouthpiece, nor does it control any newspapers, although most of them support the Government and the regenerative task of the revolution."